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August 2, 2016

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE:

Revisions to Student Dress Code Policy

Recommendation: That the School Committee approve the revisions to the Student Dress Code Policy as detailed in the attached document.

This is the second reading of this proposed policy revision.

Description: The revisions to the Student Dress Code Policy that are detailed in the attached document are being made in order to bring the language of the policy into alignment with the revisions to the Student Dress Code language contained in the Rights & Responsibilities Handbook that were approved by the School Committee at its meeting on June 21, 2016.

Supporting data: Student Dress Code Policy

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth N. Salim, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

STUDENT DRESS CODE

Students are permitted to dress in compliance with this dress code in a manner consistent with their gender identity. Students shall have a right to express themselves by the dress and hair style of their own choosing provided students meet their responsibility to dress and groom in a manner that conforms to the reasonable and acceptable standards of health, safety and cleanliness, and which will not cause a disruption of the educational process, and is not offensive and/or does not endanger the health, safety and welfare of the student or others. Feet must be covered (shod) at all times.

~~Clothing will be deemed inappropriate if it is disturbing to other students or in any way interferes with the educational process. This includes, but is not limited to, bare midriffs, short shorts, low slung trousers and other clothing which is offensive and/or violates acceptable standards of dress.~~

Students are prohibited from wearing clothing, jewelry and/or accessories that:

have slogans, comments or designs that are obscene, lewd or vulgar;
are directed towards or intended to harm, harass, threaten, intimidate or demean individual groups or individuals of sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, color, ancestry, national origin, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, genetic information, gender identity, or marital status;
and/or advertise alcoholic beverages, tobacco products or illegal drugs.

Students may not come to school shirtless, pantless, or shoeless. All students dressed in accordance with this policy should not experience student or staff repercussions related to their apparel regardless of how their clothing coincides with the body type, gender, sexual orientation, race, color, ancestry, national origin, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, genetic information, gender identity, gender, or race. More specifically, all students must be covered from mid-thigh to top of chest in non-see through material.

~~Parents/guardians will be notified and students will be sent home to change their clothing if a student has arrived to school in clothing that is not suitable for school, and the student will either be provided with a school-issued suitable item of clothing to wear (e.g., sweatshirt or t-shirt from the school store) to wear during the course of the school day, asked to turn clothing inside out, sent home to change their clothing or to borrow clothing from a classmate/friend to wear during the course of the school day.~~

Students are expected to follow all school rules with respect to wearing any protective clothing, safety glasses or other protective or safety equipment that may be required for participation in specialized programs.

Conversations about student apparel should be facilitated where both parties have an equal voice. Such conversations should not occur in front of a class or other students.

The Superintendent shall direct the principals/heads of upper schools train staff about this policy to ensure equitable and consistent application of this policy. Any discipline that is to be imposed for a violation of this policy shall be administered by the principal/head of upper school in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.

Any violation by any person of any right set forth in this Code shall be grounds for an appeal pursuant to the applicable section of the Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.

Adopted: September 6, 2011